PENNSYLVANIA LESBIAN/GAY SUPPORT NETWORK

JULY 1981

NEWSLETTER
VOL. IV
NO. 6

NEXT MEETING: SATURDAY JULY 11, 1PM
FRIENDS MEETINGHOUSE, 6th & HERR STS.,
HARRISBURG

LAW SEMINAR IN PHILADELPHIA

Rodger attended the one day seminar sponsored by the Greater Phialdephia ACLU, American Friends Service Committee and the Governor's Council on Sexual Minorities. A booklet was distributed tittled; Lesbians and Gay Men: The Law in Pennsylvania. This is a compelation of the laws for privacy, parenting, relationships, criminal law, employment, housing, social services, prisons, etc. Copies are available by writing the American Civil Liberties Union Greater Phialdelphia Branch, 260 South 15th Street, Phialdelphia 19102.

ERA COUNTDOWN RALLIES

Rallies were held in some 180 cities across the Nation on Tusday 30 June. We have only three more states to ratify the ERA in the next 365 days. The Network participated in the Harrisburg Chapter NOW Rally conducted on Tuesday evening. Ginny Thornburgh and Helen O'Bannon, Secretary of Welfare were among the speakers which included Rodger and Mary. A proclamation was read from the Governor showing his support. The Network's statement was: The Pennsylvania Lesbian/Gay Support Network recognizes the need to establish a wide based coalition with groups such as the National Organization for Women. We recognize that the struggle for the Equal Rights Amendment is a struggle for all of us. We feel that all people are human beings of worth and dignity and the elimination of sexism and racism is a goal to create a world in which each individual can live with dignity and security. Local members of the Network assisted with the food preperation decoration and cleanup. We have also made a monetary donation as agreed upon at our June meeting. We strongly urge that Network members contact their local NOW Chapters and help with their time and talents to ensure the ERA

GAY PRIDE DAY

Several Network members participated in local Gay Pride Day Rallies and marches on Sunday 28 June; the twelth anniversary of the Stonewall rebellion in New York City. We need this type of gathering and celebration to rejuvinate our spirits and energies to move on with the causes.

STATE LEGISLATION

Both HB 500 and 1036 remain in the Judiciary Committee. We reported extensively on these Bills in the May Newsletter. The Legislature will recess at the end of July and not reconvene until 21 September. Republican Howard Fargo of Grove City in Mercer County has been elected in a special election giving the Republicans a 102 to 100 lead in the House. A special election has been set for 15 September to fill the vacancy created by the death of Representative Republican Arthur Early of Deleware County.

ANTI-ABORTION PLAN

A package of bills, to make i as difficult as possible" to have an abortion performed in Pennsylvania was introduced in the State House on Tuesday. The four bills containing the signatures of 25 legislators charge that abortion clinics are being operated "for profit motives and not as health care facilities." Republicans Stephen Friend of Havertown and Greg Cunningham of State College are the prime co-sponsors. The legislation is the work of the Americans United for Life, a Chicago based organization that also did the research. Pennsylvnia is hoped to be a National model for this legislation which is to be introduced in all 50 states. Cunningham is quoted as saying, "My intention is to make Pennsylvania the most difficult state to get abortion on demand." The most important part of the legislation deals with steps to be taken when a determination is made that the "unborn child" is viable, or when the possibility of viability exists. Attending physicians would have to take "all possible steps to preserve the life of the newborn child." The term "unborn child," not fetus, is used in the legislation, and that it means, "a human being from fertilizaiton until birth." Once viability is determined abortion would not be permitted except when necessary to protect the life or health of the mother. Color photos of fetuses would be

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(clip and mail to: PL/GSN PO BOX 822, Federal Square Station, Harrisburg, Pa. 17108)

( ) I am enclosing $20 for a one year subscription to the Newsletter and membership.

( ) I am enclosing $12 suggested hardship or student membership and the Newsletter.

( ) I would like to support the Network with a contribution.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

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available for showing, but the mother would not be required to view them. A women seeking abortion would have to wait a 72 hour period, during which she would be counseled about the procedure. The interval is intended to counteract any "coercion" the woman may have encountered in obtaining the abortion. The state would have to stop funding abortions under tax-paid health care for state employees and the bill would require additional premiums for abortion coverage on all other group health plans offered in the state. The bill would require issuance of death certificates after abortions, along with a pathological examination of the aborted fetus to determine whether it was viable at the time of the operation, ban abortion at all publicaly owned clinics, except when needed to save a woman's life, require that parents of minors seeking an abortion (except an emanicipated minor) be informed before an abortion, except when the operation is an emergency, require that the father of an unborn child be notified of any impending abortion, although the father would have no say as to whether it should or should not be performed and require that after the first trimester of pregnancy, all abortions be performed in a hospital on an inpatient basis. Needless to say this will become a major focus of our attention over the next few months.

WORKSESSIONS

At our June meeting we discussed the progress of the three major worksessions that we have been conducting. The Pride '82 Worksession will be making some decissions at our July meeting and begin the work of developing the 1982 Pride Conference. We hope to select a local group and will be working with them to develop an exciting program. Anyone with exeperience and expertise, or suggestions please come to our July meeting and/or send us information on your desires for Pride '82. The Legislative Manual should be ready for review and decissions made in July concerning the printing format, cost, distribution, etc. This is a major task of the Network and is very important to accomplish soon. The Media Campaign will be reviewing their final materials for the letters to be sent to prospective menmbers and articles for state and local publications. We hope to have the work of most of these sessions completed by August. It would also appear that we will now be very busy with keeping up with the legislation that has been introduced and subsequent bills plus the developemnt of Pride '82. We will also be examining our involvment with the 1982 Gubnatorial election. It may be summer but it is only getting hotter out there. We hope to see you at our July meeting so we can move on with all the above and much more.

FEDERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Federal Governemnt is also moving on with their swing to the Right. A Bill S.1090 to amend the Public Health Service Act to support services and research to adolescent pregnancy and parenthood has been introduced. The "Teenage Chastity Bill" has been intorduced by Alabama Republican freshman Moral Majority backed Senator Jermiah Denton. This bill would make it the business of the federal government, not of parents, to define promiscuity, to inform adolescents of the harmful effects of sexual relations, and to promote teenage childbearing with the intention that babies born out of wedlock could then be put up for adoption. This bill would not only lessen parental influence on value formation among adolescents, but will undermine the opportunity for teenagers to make responsible decissions for themselves. The Bill states that it is to promote self-discipline and chastity and other positive family-centered approaches to the problems of adolescent promiscuity and adolescent prenancy. Promiscuity means having sexual intercourse out of wedlock. No recipient of assistance under this title may provide abortion counseling or referral, make any payment for the performance of an abortion, or conduct any research relating to abortion.

Senator Paul Laxalt of Nevada and Roger Jesepn of Iowa have intorduced the 1981 Family Protection Act. Laxalt states that, "We should appreciate the role of the woman as mother and homemaker, which has been downplayed and ridiculed." Jespen added, "Nothing is more beautiful than a mother." Wanda Harding, Moral Majority spokesman acknowledges that the bill is everything that the political group stood for. The Legal Services Agency would be barred from taking part in cases involving abortions homosexual rights and desegregation. Public schools must allow parents greater freedom, such as the right to review textbook selection, while exemting private and church schools from all federal regulations, including affrimative action, quotas, guidelines or actions designed to overcome racial imbalance. The bill would permit private schools to qualify for tax-exempt status, and tax breaks would be offered for families that include a person older than 65. A $1,000 exemption would be granted upon the birth of a child, but only if the child's parents were married.

** ALERT: WILLIAMSPORT ATTACKS **

As the Newsletter goes to press, we have been informed of at least 5 assaults on gay men in the Williamsport area. At this time the following is known about the assailant (assumed to be one person):

He has used a knife at least twice.
He is about 6' 5" tall and 220 pounds.
He looks to be 25, but claims to be younger. He uses the name "Bob."
He says he lives with his father in Jersey Shore. He wore work clothes.
He frequents Kelly's Bar.

The victims have been assaulted at Kelly's, rest stops along the major road, and in downtown Williamsport. The attacker seems quite familiar with cruising areas. He has been known to solicit sex and then attack. Some victims have been injured seriously.

Unfortunately, none of the victims have filed charges or reported the assaults to police yet. We strongly urge the victims to do so. The Network is prepared to extend all possible support and help. The PA Council for Sexual Minorities has offered to find attorneys for victims in the area. MCC, Harrisburg, is coordinating aid and information to victims. If you are a victim or can help, call (717) 238-3746. We need to apprehend the attacker!